

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
/059 W

-----080909Z 118289 /11

R 080643Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2745
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO CINCLANT
USCINCEUR
USLOSACLANT
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 USNATO 2050

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, DPC
SUBJECT: MAY 1977 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING: SECRETARY OF
DEFENSE PARTICIPATION

REFS: (A) USNATO 1801 (DTG 291835Z MAR 77) (NOTAL);
(B) USNATO 1833 (DTG 301855Z MAR 77); (C) USNATO 1500
(DTG 161840Z MAR 77) (NOTAL); (D) USNATO 744 (DTG 111045Z
FEB 77); (E) USNATO 973 (DTG 231600Z FEB 77);
(F) USNATO 1033 (DTG 251615Z FEB 77); (G) USNATO 1334
(DTG 091810Z MAR 77); (H) USNATO 1889 (DTG 011458Z
APR 77) (NOTAL); (I) STATE 075291 (DTG 050139Z APR 77)
(NOTAL)

SUMMARY: TO ASSIST IN PREPARATION FOR THE MAY 1977 DPC MINIS-
TERIAL, WE OUTLINE BELOW THE MAIN ISSUES WE BELIEVE SECRETARY
BROWN SHOULD ADDRESS IN HIS INTERVENTIONS AT THE MEETING.
MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE 1977, WHICH WILL BE BEFORE MINISTERS
FOR ADOPTION, COULD PROVIDE A CONVENIENT PLATFORM FOR ANY
INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS BY THE SECRETARY FOR IMPROVING NATO
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DEFENSE AND USE OF RESOURCES AND FOR STRESSING AN EQUITABLE
SHARING OF THE DEFENSE BURDEN. ALTERNATIVELY, WE CAN REQUEST A
SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM, E.G., "STATEMENT BY THE US SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE." END SUMMARY.

1. GENERAL: THIS SPRING'S MEETING OF ALLIANCE DEFENSE
MINISTERS TAKES ON SPECIAL IMPORTANCE, COMING ALMOST
IMMEDIATELY ON THE HEELS OF THE ECONOMIC AND NATO SUMMITS
AND OFFERING THE FIRST FORUM FOR AN IN-DEPTH EXPOSITION
OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S VIEWS ON THE FULL RANGE OF

ALLIANCE DEFENSE ISSUES. THE NAC SUMMIT WILL HAVE PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO REAFFIRM THE CONTINUING US COMMITMENT TO DO ITS PART IN MAINTAINING THE SECURITY OF ALL ALLIES AND THE EAST-WEST POWER BALANCE (REF A). AMONG THE ISSUES THAT WILL CARRY OVER FOR MORE DETAILED TREATMENT AT THE DPC MINISTERIAL ARE: (A) THE OVERALL TRENDS IN THE NATO/WARSAW PACT CONVENTIONAL MILITARY BALANCE, (B) THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LONG-TERM PROGRAM OF FORCE IMPROVEMENTS AND INCREASED COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO DEAL WITH THESE TRENDS, (C) THE PACT'S INCREASING CAPABILITY TO LAUNCH UNREINFORCED ATTACK AND RESULTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR NATO, AND (D) INCREASED INTEREST IN NUCLEAR ISSUES, PARTICULARLY CRUISE MISSILES.

2. THE TRENDS. THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION STRESSED THAT THE TRENDS IN RELATIVE NATO/PACT CAPABILITY WERE ADVERSE. THE ALLIES WILL BE INTERESTED IN THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S NET JUDGMENT ON THE NATURE OF THE THREAT. THEY MAY ECHO THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL PERMREPS AT THE MARCH 16 PRIVATE NAC SESSION (STEMMING FROM GEORGE WILSON'S WASHINGTON POST STORY) THAT SECRETARY BROWN MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOVIET THREAT (REF C).

3. UNREINFORCED ATTACK.
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A. TO DATE, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE OR NO DEBATE IN NATO FORA OF THE NUNN/BARTLETT, HOLLINGSWORTH AND CLOSE THESIS RE THE HEIGHTENED DANGER OF SURPRISE ATTACK. THE RECENT PLETHORA OF LITERATURE ON THE MOUNTING DANGER OF FLITZKRIEG IS LONG ON ASSERTION BUT SHORT ON ANALYSIS. SIMILARLY, ARGUMENTS REFUTING THAT THESIS HAVE LARGELY DONE SO ON THE BASIS OF ASSERTION. A STATEMENT BY SECDEF OUTLINING THE US' BEST ESTIMATE OF THE DIMENSIONS OF AN UNREINFORCED ATTACK, BASED ON INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION AND THOROUGH ANALYSIS, WOULD BE WELCOME. HOWEVER, THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF NATO'S VULNERABILITY TO SURPRISE ATTACK HAS IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR SHAPING ALLIANCE DEFENSE EFFORTS, AND OUR ALLIES WILL WANT NOT ONLY OUR JUDGMENTS BUT THE REASONS FOR THEM.

B. WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED THAT:

(1) THE US ACCOMPANY ITS INITIATIVES FOR IMPROVING NATO DEFENSE WITH ASSURANCES THAT THOSE INITIATIVES ARE DIRECTED AT MAKING SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN NATO'S CAPABILITY TO EXECUTE THE AGREED STRATEGY; AND

(2) THE US ADHERE TO ITS ESTABLISHED AND SENSIBLE POSITION THAT NATO MUST BE PREPARED TO DEAL

WITH A VARIETY OF CONTINGENCIES RANGING FROM SURPRISE TO FULLY REINFORCED ATTACK, WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIVE DANGERS OF VARIOUS TYPE ATTACKS WILL AFFECT ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT.

SECRETARY BROWN MAY WISH TO MAKE THE ABOVE TWO POINTS AT THE MAY MINISTERIAL.

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/059 W

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R 080643Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
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4. US PRIORITIES FOR CONVENTIONAL FORCE IMPROVEMENTS.

A. WASHINGTON'S LEADERSHIP ROLE WILL BE CENTRAL TO THE DETERMINATION OF PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND OF GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PHASING AND PACE. IN A SERIES OF TELEGRAMS UNDER THE GENERAL RUBRIC "THE CHALLENGE OF ALLIANCE DEFENSE" (REFS D, E, F, AND G), WE HAVE FORWARDED OUR SUGGESTIONS ON SPECIFIC INITIATIVES FOR IMPROVING NATO DEFENSE, WHICH GENERALLY LINK UNILATERAL US IMPROVEMENTS TO RECIPROCAL EUROPEAN IMPROVEMENTS - FOR EXAMPLE: INCREASED READINESS OF US REINFORCEMENTS IN EXCHANGE FOR IMPROVED ALLIED RESERVE AND MILITIA FORCES, AND MEASURES TO DECREASE TRANSIT TIME OF US REINFORCEMENTS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC IN EXCHANGE FOR INCREASED ALLIED SUPPORT AT RECEPTION FACILITIES AND FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT IN-THEATER. WE HAVE ALSO ADDRESSED INCREASED ANTI-TANK GUIDED WEAPON DENSITY IN THE FORCES OF OUR CENTRAL REGION ALLIES, IMPROVING THE COORDINATION OF COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS (DRAWING ON OUR OBSERVATIONS OF PROGRAMS SUCH AS F-16 AND NATO AEW), AND ACHIEVING COMPLEMENTARY NATIONAL-NATO

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COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS (C3) SYSTEMS (REF B).

B. THE US HAS INFORMED THE ALLIES THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS INITIATED A MAJOR REVIEW OF US MILITARY POSTURE, WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED THIS SUMMER. ALTHOUGH OUR ALLIES WILL BE EAGER TO HEAR SECRETARY BROWN'S VIEWS ON NATO DEFENSE, THEY WILL RECOGNIZE THAT THE ONGOING REVIEW AND THE ABSENCE OF FINAL DECISIONS ON THE FY-79 BUDGET MAY LIMIT, OR MAKE PROVISIONAL, ANY STATEMENT REGARDING IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES. HOWEVER, ANY COMMENT BY SECDEF ON THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE REVIEW TO DATE WOULD HELP UNDERLINE OUR PROMISE TO CONSULT.

C. THE AGENDA (REF H) SUB-ITEM ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE 1977 AFFORDS AN APPROPRIATE SPRINGBOARD FOR A MAJOR SECDEF INTERVENTION ON NATO DEFENSE. MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE WILL CONTAIN A SECTION ON PRIORITIES, GIVING SECDEF THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRESS ANY OF THOSE LISTED, OR TO PROPOSE OTHERS. SHOULD THE US ELECT TO LAUNCH NEW DEFENSE PLANNING INITIATIVES, E.G., ALONG THE LINES OF REF I, THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE FORM OF A PROPOSAL TO FLESH OUT MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE 1977 OR TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON PERFORMANCE IN IMPLEMENTING ITS PROVISIONS. ALTERNATIVELY, IF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE DOES NOT SEEM A PROPER OR ADEQUATE VEHICLE FOR US INITIATIVES, WASHINGTON MAY WISH TO INSTRUCT US TO ASK FOR AN ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM TITLED ALONG THE LINE OF "STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE."

D. HOWEVER WASHINGTON DECIDES TO PROCEED, ANY PROPOSAL REQUIRING FOLLOW-UP SHOULD BE MADE IN PLENARY SESSION, AND WE RECOMMEND THAT FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO CIRCULATING SECDEF'S STATEMENT IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING, SAY THE DAY BEFORE, FOR INCLUSION IN THE MEETING VERBATIM RECORD. ADVANCE CIRCULATION WOULD OFFER SOME REAL ADVANTAGES, CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTICULARLY IF SECDEF WILL BE PROPOSING MAJOR INITIATIVES: (1) IT WOULD MINIMIZE TRANSLATION ERRORS, OR LOSS OF NUANCES, AS SOMETIMES OCCURS WITH SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION; (2) IT WOULD PROVIDE ALLIED DELEGATIONS TIME TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS AND INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF A MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS; (3) IT WOULD ENABLE SECDEF TO KEEP HIS REMARKS AT THE MEETING ITSELF RELATIVELY BRIEF.

5. NUCLEAR ISSUES. SECDEF'S REMARKS ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY ADDRESS SENSITIVE ISSUES, E.G., CRUISE MISSILES, CAN BE RESERVED FOR RESTRICTED SESSION. THIS WOULD PROVIDE MORE

PROTECTION AGAINST LEAKS, WITH THE FURTHER ADVANTAGE
THAT THE REMARKS DO NOT BECOME PART OF ANY OFFICIAL
RECORD. AT THE DPC, THE ALLIES WILL NOT EXPECT
THE DETAILED EXPOSITION OF US VIEWS THAT WILL BE
GIVEN AT THE NPG.

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R 080643Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
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6. BY SEPTTEL, WE WILL PROVIDE DETAILED SUGGESTIONS FOR
SECDEF'S STATEMENTS ON THE VARIOUS AGENDA TOPICS AS WELL
AS FOR HIS MAJOR INTERVENTION ON DEFENSE PLANNING. IN
GENERAL, WHETHER HIS MAJOR INTERVENTION BE IN WRITING
FOR ADVANCE CIRCULATION OR DELIVERED IN PLENARY SESSION,
WE RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY BROWN REINFORCE THE THEME WE
PROPOSED (REF A) FOR THE PRESIDENT TO STRESS AT THE NATO
SUMMIT ABOVE ALL OTHERS: CONFIDENCE THAT THE ALLIES CAN,
BY COLLECTIVE EFFORTS, MEET THE CHALLENGES THAT FACE THEM.
THE TONE SHOULD BE OPTIMISTIC, CONVEYING A SPIRIT OF
AMERICAN STRENGTH, DYNAMISM, AND LEADERSHIP. HE SHOULD NOT
CONCEDE THAT DEFENSE SPENDING SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO REDUCTION
IN TIME OF ECONOMIC DIFFICULTY IN THE SAME WAY AS OTHER
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS. HE SHOULD COUCH POSSIBLE US FORCE
IMPROVEMENTS IN TERMS OF MEASURES THE US IN QUOTE PREPARED
TO CONSIDER END QUOTE, MAKING CLEAR THAT ACTUAL DECISIONS
ON THESE MEASURES WILL BE CONDITIONED BY IMPROVE-
MENTS THE ALLIES ARE PREPARED TO MAKE (REFS D, E, F AND G).

7. IN SUM, THE MAY MINISTERIAL WILL PROVIDE THE SECRETARY
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OF DEFENSE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS A NUMBER OF ISSUES
OF GREAT INTEREST TO THE ALLIES, TO LAUNCH PROPOSALS
FOR IMPROVING NATO DEFENSE AND USE OF RESOURCES,

AND TO UNDERLINE THAT THE UNITED STATES EXPECTS AN
EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE DEFENSE BURDEN. OTHER
MINISTERS WILL BE EAGER TO HEAR SECRETARY BROWN'S
VIEWS, AND THE SECRETARY'S INTERVENTIONS COULD,
WE BELIEVE, STRONGLY INFLUENCE THE PRIORITIES
AND PACE OF NATO'S DEFENSE PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN
THE FOLLOWING MONTHS. STRAUSSZ-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 30-Aug-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NATO02050
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197704102/baaabcvp.tel
Line Count: 281
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: a4f6b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) USNATO 1801 (DTG 291835Z MAR 77) (NOTAL); (B) USNATO 1833 (DTG 301855Z MAR 77); (C) USNATO 1500 (DTG 161840Z MAR 77) (NOTAL); (D) USNATO 744 (DTG 111045Z FEB 77); (E) USNATO 973 (DTG 231600Z FEB 77); (F) USNATO 1033 (DTG 251615Z FEB 77); (G) USNATO 1334 (DTG 091810Z MAR 77)
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2665442
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAY 1977 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PARTICIPATION
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, DPC
To: STATE SECDEF MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a4f6b39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

